



When parents of children are separated, arrangements for those children to spend time with the both parents can vary widely.

Sometimes children split their time, almost equally, between households, while others only see the parent they do not live with once a week, or anything in between.

During these current restrictions, when we are all being asked to stay at home as much as possible, and not to mix with people outside our own household, what should parents and children be doing to maintain those important relationships?

Now, more than ever, parents need to put aside any differences they may have and communicate with one another in their children's best interests. The decision as to whether a child is to move between two homes is for the child's parents to make, together if possible, having assessed the circumstances and taking into account the child's state of health and that of others in both households, the risks of infection and the presence of any vulnerable individuals in either household.

If necessary, take advice from your lawyer. Should any specific medical concerns arise, then parents could consider contacting their GP to discuss any risks which might arise from continuing with their existing contact arrangements.

In circumstances where direct contact with the other parent is not possible, other arrangements should be considered, for example, Skype, Facetime, WhatsApp, Zoom or other video connection. If none of these are available there is always the telephone.

Once the current restrictions are over, should either parent's actions be scrutinised by the Family Court, it is likely the Court will consider whether each parent acted reasonably in light of the official stay at home advice and genuinely put their children's best interests first.

For further information on this subject please contact our Dispute Resolution team.